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quently arrested by deep ravines, which seam the banks, and suddenly disclose their precipitous and dismal depths, the more unexpectedly as the plain over which one happens to be marching appears to be perfectly level. A river usually flows at the bottom of these enormous crevasses bordered with trees and shrubs. Footpaths lead into many of them, but the descent is most difficult, especially for mules and pack-camels."

On reaching the mouth of the Churmysh, and reconnoitering the country for a distance of nearly thirty miles, Prejevalsky "became convinced of the impossibility of crossing the enormous mountain-chain extending along the Yellow river. The summits of these mountains are lost in clouds, gloomy ravines are encountered at every verst, and there is not the slightest trace of vegetation, therefore no forage for our animals. Pursuing my investigations further, I saw clearly that our mules could never go round these mountains, the roads being only accessible for camels accustomed to the privations of the desert, and it is even doubtful if camels could accomplish the ascent of the Burkan-Buddha." He therefore turned back down the stream to Houi-dé, forty miles below Gomi, arriving there two months after his departure from Sining.

Five hundred specimens of birds and many fishes and plants have been collected. "Blue pheasants were particularly numerous. This fine bird, only a few specimens of which may be seen in the Museums of Paris, St. Petersburg, and London is met with frequently at an altitude of 9500 feet. Every day we killed several, and preserved twenty-six for our collections. Had it not been for difficulty of transport, we might have collected hundreds. The second rarity of this country is rhubarb, often found in large quantities. Old roots of it grow to a colossal size. One of those I took measured sixteen inches in length, twelve in breadth, and seven in thickness, and weighed twenty-six pounds."

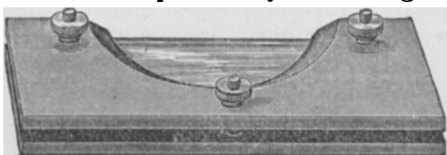
MICROSCOPY.¹

ADULTERATIONS OF DRUGS.—A report on this subject by C. Lewis Diehl, in the National Board of Health Bulletin, states that most of the information that can be gained on the subject is too vague or general in its character to be satisfactory. It is understood that the falsification of drugs is carried on extensively at the present time, and it is known that certain drugs are particularly subject to adulteration or falsification, but there is great difficulty in obtaining particulars that are definite or valuable. The literature of the subject, except a few papers of general scope, is mostly included in the standard text books of pharmacy, and in the Proceedings of the American Pharmaceutical Association, which have been published annually since 1852. The author discriminates carefully between deteriorations which may take place

¹This department is edited by Dr. R. H. Ward, Troy, N. Y.

by time or by improper exposure to causes of change, and substitutions which may be made unintentionally or without the knowledge of the vender, and adulterations which imply intentional debasement for the purposes of deception and gain. The general conclusion is reached that the drug market is so fairly honest that persons who really desire to obtain articles of standard quality, and at a proportionate price, have very little difficulty in being able to do so, and can be suited by respectable dealers throughout the land, while poor and adulterated articles are present, and are very likely to be obtained by ignorant persons or by those who are indifferent to the character of the dealer, and are desirous of regulating their purchases by the price rather than the quality of the goods. Crude drugs can usually be obtained of good quality, though many are sold, which have deteriorated by prolonged or careless preservation. Powdered drugs (those of fair quality can usually be obtained) are liable to the grossest adulterations, particularly those which are frequently handled (like spices) by both grocers and druggists. That this practice still continues is shown by the fact that powders are often sold at the price of, or at an inadequate advance upon, the crude drug, notwithstanding the loss incurred in drying and powdering. Infusions, decoctions, solid and fluid extracts, and tinctures are all found to vary in strength and quality from good and indifferent to positively bad; some manufacturers adhering to the requirements of the Pharmacopœia, while others admit inferiorities in order to save cost and to be able to undersell.

HARD RUBBER ZOOPHYTE TROUGH.—A new zoophyte trough, just brought to notice, is so neat, convenient, and free from faults that it cannot fail to be used with pleasure. Two plates of glass, somewhat like glass object slides, are separated by a half ring of soft rubber, and clamped together by two plates of hard rubber, held together by binding screws, and cut away to show the objects, as illustrated in the engraving.



These troughs contain many valuable features; any thickness of glass can be used, and it can be easily taken out for cleaning, and easily replaced if broken, and the thickness of the cell can be varied indefinitely by using different thicknesses of sheet rubber between the glasses. The whole contrivance is an adaptation, in a most attractive and valuable form, of the troughs which have been used for holding living objects, and for exhibiting crystallization, in the projecting microscope. It can be obtained from Mr. Walmsley, manager for R. & J. Beck, 1016 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia.

THE ACME MICROSCOPES.—John W. Sidle & Co., of Lancaster, Pa., have issued a catalogue which gives a fair representation

of their new enterprise. Besides the very simple and excellent Acme microscopes and the accessories belonging to them, much information is given in regard to microscopical supplies in general.

THE SPENCER OBJECTIVES.—The partnership heretofore existing between C. A. Spencer & Sons, has been dissolved, and Herbert R. Spencer announces that he will hereafter furnish lenses marked H. R. Spencer & Co., made after the same formulas, and of the same uniform excellence, which have for years past characterized the lenses made under his supervision, by the old company.

GUTTA PERCHA CELLS.—These rings for mounting dry objects, can be obtained from Lloyd H. Smith, of Geneva, N. Y., at from fifty to eighty cents per hundred. They are such as are used by Prof. H. L. Smith, and are suitable for diatoms and other thin objects.

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SCIENTIFIC NEWS.

— The U. S. Entomological Commission designs preparing for publication, probably in the appendix of its third report, a bibliography of American (and Canadian) economic entomology. The bibliography will contain references to papers, articles and notes in agricultural and popular scientific periodicals, as well as journals devoted to bee culture, and as complete as possible references will be made to entomological notes in those periodicals which appeared prior to 1850. The titles of notes, articles, reports on works, will be entered under the name of authors, or of periodicals, especially agricultural reports and papers, with brief digest of contents given in a line or two, in the same style as in Mr. Mann's excellent bibliographical record of *Psyche*, the organ of the Cambridge Entomological Club, of Cambridge, Mass.

After due pains are taken such a record will necessarily be quite imperfect. The compiler will have to rely much on aid from authors of any and every article or note on economic entomology. Its completeness will greatly depend on the care with which entomologists may prepare lists of their own articles. Entomologists are therefore earnestly requested to coöperate by sending full lists of their papers or notes on any subject connected with *economic entomology* (not general or scientific entomology unless bearing on the applied science) and prepared in the style of that of *Psyche*, to A. S. Packard, Jr., at Providence, R. I.

— Jacob Boll, of Dallas, Texas, died recently in Western Texas at a distance from civilization. He was a native of the Canton of Aargau, Switzerland, and was a pupil of Agassiz before the latter came to the United States. He was active in promoting educational reform in his native country, and was an authority in entomology. During a long residence in Texas he was an untiring collector, and sent many specimens to Europe. His collections of insects, especially of Lepidoptera, are une-